

Outpatient Surgery, Adult

An outpatient surgery is a procedure that does not require you to stay overnight at a hospital or clinic. If you have an outpatient surgery, you can go home hours after the surgery is complete.

Tell a health care provider about:

- Any allergies you have.
- All medicines you are taking, including vitamins, supplements, herbs, eye drops, creams, and over-the-counter medicines.
- Any problems you or family members have had with anesthetic medicines.
- Any bleeding problems you have.
- Any surgeries you have had.
- Any medical conditions you have.
- Any use of tobacco products, alcohol, or drugs. This includes marijuana.
- Whether you are pregnant or may be pregnant.

What are the risks?

Your health care provider will talk with you about risks. These may include:

- Infection.
- Bleeding.
- Blood clots in the legs or lungs.
- Allergic reactions to medicines or dyes.
- Damage to nearby structures or organs.
- Failure to fix the problem that the surgery was meant to fix.

What happens before the procedure?

When to stop eating and drinking

Follow instructions from your health care provider about what you may eat and drink. These may include:

- 8 hours before your procedure
 - Stop eating most foods. **Do not** eat meat, fried foods, or fatty foods.
 - Eat only light foods, such as toast or crackers.
 - All liquids are okay except energy drinks and alcohol.
- 6 hours before your procedure
 - Stop eating.
 - Drink only clear liquids, such as water, clear fruit juice, black coffee, plain tea, and sports drinks.
 - **Do not** drink energy drinks or alcohol.
- 2 hours before your procedure
 - Stop drinking all liquids.
 - You may be allowed to take medicines with small sips of water.

If you do not follow your health care provider's instructions, your procedure may be delayed or canceled.

Medicines



- Ask your health care provider about:
 - Changing or stopping your regular medicines. These include any diabetes medicines or blood thinners you take.
 - Taking medicines such as aspirin and ibuprofen. These medicines can thin your blood. **Do not** take them unless your health care provider tells you to.
 - Taking over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, herbs, and supplements.
- You may be asked to take medicines that help you have a bowel movement (laxatives) or antibiotics to help prevent infection.

Surgery safety

Ask your health care provider:

- How your surgery site will be marked.
- What steps will be taken to help prevent infection. These steps may include:
 - Removing hair at the surgery site.
 - Washing skin with a soap that kills germs.
 - Receiving antibiotics.

General instructions



- You may have an exam or testing.
- **Do not** use any products that contain nicotine or tobacco for at least 4 weeks before the procedure. These products include cigarettes, chewing tobacco, and vaping devices, such as e-cigarettes. If you need help quitting, ask your health care provider.
- Call your health care provider if you develop an illness or problem that may prevent you from safely having your procedure.
- If told by your health care provider, bring your sleep apnea device with you on the day of your surgery.
- You will be going home after the procedure. Plan to have a responsible adult:
 - Take you home from the hospital or clinic. You will not be allowed to drive.
 - Care for you for the time you are told.

What happens during the procedure?

- An IV will be inserted into one of your veins.
- You may be given:
 - A sedative. This helps you relax.

- Anesthesia. This will:
 - Numb certain areas of your body.
 - Make you fall asleep for surgery.
- Any incisions made during the procedure will be closed with stitches (sutures), staples, skin glue, or adhesive strips.
- A bandage (dressing) may be placed over any sutures or other closures.

Other steps will depend on the type of procedure that you are having. The procedure may also vary among health care providers and hospitals.

What happens after the procedure?



- Your blood pressure, heart rate, breathing rate, and blood oxygen level will be monitored until you leave the hospital or clinic.
- If there are no complications, you will be allowed to go home with a responsible adult when you are awake, stable, and taking fluids well.
- The surgery site will feel tender.
- You may feel nauseous. You may also have some swelling, bruising, and numbness around the surgery site.
- If you were given a sedative during the procedure, it can affect you for several hours. **Do not** drive or operate machinery until your health care provider says that it is safe.

Summary

- An outpatient surgery is a procedure that does not require you to stay overnight at a hospital or clinic.
- Follow instructions from your health care provider about eating and drinking before surgery.
- Ask your health care provider if you need to take any new medicines before surgery. Change or stop your regular medicines as told by your health care provider.
- **Do not** use any products that contain nicotine or tobacco for at least 4 weeks before the procedure.
- Plan to have someone take you home from the hospital or clinic and care for you for the time you are told.

This information is not intended to replace advice given to you by your health care provider. Make sure you discuss any questions you have with your health care provider.